

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 3545
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Intergovernmental Relations
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties note that the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority was created by the legislature several years ago as a conservation and reclamation district to serve a public use and benefit by bringing together regional water interests to accomplish projects and services in South Texas. The authority's mission is to enhance the capability of the primary water source in the region to serve the region well into the future. The parties note that the authority was created to supplement, but not replace, the services, regulatory powers, and authority of political subdivisions within the authority's boundaries. The interested parties further note that the authority seeks to create an infrastructure improvement council to help address the region's critical water needs. H.B. 3545 seeks to address this issue.

H.B. 3545 amends current law relating to the establishment of an infrastructure improvement council by the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority and provides authority to impose a voluntary assessment.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 1.01, Chapter 385, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, by adding Subdivision (4-b) to define "council."

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 385, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, by adding Article IB, as follows:

ARTICLE IB. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

Sec. 1B.01. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL. (a) Requires the board of directors of the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (board) to establish an infrastructure improvement council (council) in connection with the implementation of infrastructure improvement projects within the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority's territory.

(b) Requires the board to set, according to a formula determined by the board, an annual voluntary assessment. Requires that revenue from the assessment imposed under this subsection be deposited to the credit of an infrastructure improvement fund to be administered by the council.

(c) Requires a member of the conference that pays the voluntary assessment under Subsection (b) to appoint a representative to serve as a member of the council.

(d) Authorizes the council to apply for financial assistance under Subchapters G (State Water Implementation Fund for Texas) and H (State Water Implementation Revenue Fund for Texas), Chapter 15, Water Code, and may implement infrastructure improvement projects approved by the council under this article.

(e) Requires the council to study the viability of each infrastructure improvement project requested by council members to determine whether an infrastructure improvement project is eligible to receive financial assistance from the council.

(f) Provides that only members of the council are eligible to receive financial assistance from the council for infrastructure improvement projects under this article.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2015.